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ABSTRACT

Since 1970 there has been increased interest on the part of State Department of Education in the development of performance criteria for teachers, and in Competency Based Teacher Education (CBTE). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education has developed five characteristics of CBTE, five implied characteristics of CBTE, and seven related and desirable characteristics of CBTE. The improvement of teacher education, using CBTE, is related to the issues of competencies, certification, tenure, professional organizations and assessment of programs. The Occupational Teacher Education Program at the University of Michigan is a competency-oriented approach to teacher education, with emphasis placed on common professional teaching competencies. Teaching experiences are utilized to develop applications to specific service areas. (SA)

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AN INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
OF COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER
EDUCATION (CBTE)

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INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of competency-based teacher education. In order that this purpose might be achieved, the material is organized around three enabling purposes:

1. Provide a brief historical sketch indicating the significance and definition of competency-based teacher education.
2. Provide a set of standards which may be utilized to assess the extent of competency orientation in teacher education.
3. Identify and briefly react to several issues related to competency-based teacher education.

CBTE SIGNIFICANCE AND DEFINITION

The significance and definition of CBTE are difficult to establish. This difficulty exists primarily because of CBTE's infancy and rapid growth. This birth and subsequent growth has caused many people to refer to CBTE as a movement -- please the literal, no pun intended. Following are indications of CBTE support.

The Educational Retrieval Information Center, ERIC, provides an interesting base to address the question of CBTE significance and definition. ERIC first listed a descriptor of CBTE in 1972. Practically all substantive information on CBTE originated since 1970. Thus, one can reason that CBTE is very contemporary. The ERIC thesaurus refers one from CBTE to performance based teacher education, PBTE. Thus, one can reason that CBTE and PBTE are one in the same. The descriptor PBTE has three other notation references. The scope term notation, SN, provides two more pieces of data (1) CBTE stresses the explicit and (2) CBTE requires that one demonstrate what one can do. Thus, one may reason the CBTE relates to explicit and demonstrated behavior of teachers. The broad term notation, BT, lists teacher education. This provides little new information. The related term notation, RT, lists three further pieces of information (1) educational program, (2) performance criterion, and (3) performance specification. The last two pieces of information can lead one to reason that CBTE has a relationship with performance objective. Should one find the forenoted information interesting, one should also find the lack of information also interesting. The ERIC thesaurus has not yet related CBTE with competency or performance based

certification of teachers. This point will be addressed later in the issue portion of the paper.

The significance of the movement is also indicated in a survey conducted by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, AACTE, in 1970. The survey indicated that about one-third of the State Departments of Education in the United States were involved in developing performance criteria for teachers. An approximate one-third more were planning to move in this direction. The remaining departments reported no interest. The qualitative and quantitative aspects of involvement varies considerably. The range spans from no involvement to a proposed implementation of a competency-based program in 1972 in the state of Washington. These efforts have produced operational programs in several colleges and universities. Weber State College in Utah, University of Washington, Governor State in Illinois, and vocational-technical teacher education at Wayne State and The University of Michigan are a few examples.

Still further evidence of significance is provided in the PBTE Annotated Bibliography. The publication of August, 1972, lists over two hundred entries of books and articles written on the topic. No doubt this number has doubled since publication.

The final example of significance is likely the most dramatic. On February 20, 1973, Dr. John Porter presented the following recommendation to the State Board of Education.

I recommend that the State Board invite all Michigan teacher preparation institutions to take immediate action to developing competency-based teacher preparation programs under the Board approval already granted such institutions or under Rule 53 which authorized experimental teacher education programs which requires an approval action by the State Board. The invitation shall be conveyed by the Superintendent to appropriate representatives of each of Michigan's teacher preparation institutions.

In summary, there is little doubt that CBTE is a departure from status quo teacher education. Further, CBTE has a broad base of support and appears to be gaining more acceptance each day. Hence, the question of significance no longer becomes significant. The question of definition, however, is still open-ended. The standards should help.

CBTE STANDARDS

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, AACTE, in 1970, established a committee and commissioned several papers on the subject of CBTE. From these papers evolved five characteristics of CBTE, five implied characteristics of CBTE, and seven related and desirable characteristics of CBTE. These characteristics follow:

CBTE CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Competencies (knowledge, skills, behaviors) to be demonstrated by the student are derived from explicit conceptions of teacher roles, stated so as to make possible assessment of a student's behavior in relation to specific competencies, and made public in advance.
2. Criteria to be employed in assessing competencies are based upon, and in harmony with, specified competencies; explicit in stating expected levels of mastery under specified conditions; and made public in advance.
3. Assessment of the student's competency uses his performance as the primary source of evidence; takes into account evidence of the student's knowledge relevant to planning for, analyzing, interpreting, or evaluating situations or behaviors; and strives for objectivity.
4. The student's rate of progress through the program is determined by demonstrated competency rather than by time or course completion.
5. The instructional program is intended to facilitate the development and evaluation of the student's achievement of competencies specified.

Implied Characteristics:

1. Instruction is individualized, personalized, and modularized.
2. The learning experience of the individual is guided by feedback.
3. The program as a whole is systemic.
4. The emphasis is on exit, not on entrance, requirements.
5. The student is held accountable for performance, completing the program when, and only when, he demonstrates the competencies that have been identified as requisite for a particular professional role.

Related and Desirable Characteristics:

1. The program is field-centered.
2. There is a broad base for decision making (including such groups as college/university faculty, students, and public school personnel).
3. The protocol and training materials provided to students focus upon concepts, skills, knowledges, (usually in units called modules) which can be learned in a specific instructional setting.
4. Both the teachers and the students are designers of the instructional system.
5. The program is open and regenerative; it has a research component.
6. Preparation for a professional role is viewed as continuing throughout the career of the professional.
7. Instruction moves from mastery of specific techniques to role integration.

Scrutiny of these characteristics reveals seventeen aspects of CBTE. These aspects can be viewed as parameters, a checklist, the standards, and indeed, the functional definition of CBTE.

CBTE ISSUES

Given information related to significance, definition, and standards of CBTE; teacher education will move promptly to implement CBTE. This partial performance objective statement won't work without several "buts", "however's", and "issues". What are some of the issues?

Issue one: CBTE and Competencies

The whole concept of CBTE is predicated upon the notion that knowledges, skills, and attitudes to be a teacher must be identified, performed, and evaluated. Therefore, a practical issue of identification, performance, and evaluation become very real.

Reaction

Look to the literature and research. This problem has already been addressed. Granted it isn't perfect but there is no real reason to rediscover the wheel. Perhaps all the old wheel needs is a tubeless tire!

Issue two: CBTE and Certification

Certification has traditionally been granted upon completion of a degree. Students who could compete academically became certified. For vocational certification work experience was required. Needless to say, this notion assumes that competence in teaching is highly correlated with obtaining degrees and, in the case of vocational certification, working a minimum of two years. This assumption caused gross inefficiency. For instance, Michigan graduates about 24,000 bachelor degree college students per year. Approximately 13,500 of these students meet general certification requirements. The same situation, over production, could evolve in occupational teacher training.

Reaction

CBTE will require that stated competencies be utilized to prepare teachers. Let's use the same system to certify teachers. The relationship between CBTE and competency-based teacher certification is very close. Let's not miss the forest for the trees!

Issue three: CBTE and Tenure

Tenure was designed to protect teachers from being released from teaching without cause. The security of teaching due to tenure was to insure that qualified teachers remained in teaching. Tenure is usually granted with the acceptance of a third-year contract. The assumption is that two competent years of teaching will lead to 10, 20, and possibly 40 years of competent teaching.

Reaction

CBTE with identified competencies can keep good teachers teaching. CBTE, not like tenure, can also provide a basis for exit of bad teachers. Let's preserve the good apples and get rid of the bad apples!

Issue four: CBTE and Professional Organizations

Organization of teachers during the past five years has led to substantial changes in economic decision-making in education. These changes have been linked to a salary

schedule based upon degrees and years of service. This practice provides a reasonably clear tool for negotiating economic issues. It has little to offer in terms of measuring teaching ability. More and more we will be hearing the cry of accountability.

Reaction

CBTE can serve as the framework from which economic issues and teacher productivity can be measured and rewarded. Let's throw our gold nuggets at a target!

Issue five: CBTE and Assessment Programs

Many states including Michigan are participating in achievement assessment programs. These programs are designed to assess cognitive skills of students. Teachers working in a state with assessment programs are influenced by pressure to produce desired cognitive results. A CBTE program will no doubt add credence to assessment.

Reaction

Legitimate assessment can only be made on measurable performance. If one can establish the competencies, one can control the assessment. The game will be the same, but at least the rules will be known!

Issue six: CBTE and Teacher Training

Ironically, teacher training institutions are looked to for leadership; yet, teacher training institutions are

probably the slowest to react to new ideas. We have a tendency to research, write, and file results concerning new ideas.

Reaction

The teacher training institutions can provide the leadership for CBTE. If we don't, the state---or public will. Let's lead not be lead!

In closing, I am reminded of this quote from Knots by R. D. Laing, Pantheon Books, Random House, New York, 1970:

They are playing a game. They are playing at not playing a game. If I show them I see they are, I shall break the rules and they will punish me. I must play their game, of not seeing I see the game.

My fellow teacher educators, we may be playing a game or we may not. Assuming that we are, let us be cognizant of a few facts:

1. The anti (cost of teacher education) is high.
2. The stakes (the kinds of teachers we produce) is even higher.
3. The rules (meeting university, state and public requirements) are complex.
4. The skill by which we play will determine the winner.

ADDENDUM

**Abstract for Undergraduate
Occupational Teacher Education Program**

The University of Michigan

PROGRAM ABSTRACT

UNDERGRADUATE OCCUPATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

The University of Michigan
4003 School of Education
by Dan Vogler

The University of Michigan's Occupational Teacher Education Program is a competency oriented approach to teacher training. The program does not distinguish between occupational service areas (i.e., T & I, Health Occupations, Business, and Distributive Education) for the professional course content. However, the technical content is quite different depending on the occupational subject to be taught. Common professional teaching competencies are emphasized while individualized learning contracts and directed teaching experiences are utilized to develop applications to specific service areas.

The undergraduate pre-service and in-service program began in the Fall of 1971 with students recruited from community college vocational-technical curricula. Students with occupational work experience were given priority in enrollment, and those without work experience were enrolled in "Structured Work Experience" courses designed to provide on-the-job learning experiences. The maintenance of students' occupational competencies is encouraged through part-time work in their respective occupational areas for all students during the program.

Students with a minimum of fifty-five semester hours of transfer credit and letters of recommendation enter the program as juniors and can complete the requirements in two years. Baccalaureate degrees are earned and graduates are qualified for general and vocational teacher certification.

Two hundred and sixty-nine competencies which form the basis of the curriculum content for The University of Michigan's program were chosen from the 384 competencies identified in the "Model Curricula for Vocational and Technical Teacher Education" project at The Ohio State University's Center for Vocational and Technical Education. Acquisition of the competencies is achieved through a variety of learning experiences. These learning experiences include the development of professional competencies which are given minimal attention in many other teacher education programs e.g.: teaching the socio-economically disadvantaged, development of student-centered instructional techniques, and self evaluation through directed teaching. The curriculum schedule described as functional course titles is outlined in Figure I-1. The starting point within the schedule depends upon the entry skills possessed by the students. The competencies to be developed are grouped according to courses.

Interim evaluation of the Undergraduate Occupational Teacher Education Program has indicated success, courses have received high ratings in relation to other courses in the School of Education, attrition is less than five percent, and earned grade points are in excess of 3.00 for over seventy-five percent of the students.

Semester 1 Courses

Methods¹
Micro-Teaching and A-V
Educational Psychology¹
Educational Sociology¹
On-site Aid/Observation
Structured Work Experience

Semester 2 Courses

General Education
Minor Requirements
Foundations Occupational Education²
Electives

SUMMER

Structured Work Experience

Semester 3 Courses

General Education
Minor Requirements
Electives

Semester 4 Courses

Directed Teaching¹

Figure I-1: Curriculum Outline Described by Functional Course Titles³

¹Required for teacher certification.

²Required by Occupational Education Program.

³Courses and semesters may be interchanged with the limitation that directed teaching must be done with senior standing.